

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: A/OC/NEA:GJGENDRON

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BEIRUT FOR RCO NEW DELHI FOR ATO

FOLLOWING REPEAT KABUL 7076 ACTION SECSTATE 2 OCT

QUOTE

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AIDAC

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: USAID/KABUL RADIO NETWORK

REF: KABUL 6924

1. SUMMARY: DIRECTOR USAID WAS CALLED ON OCTOBER 1 TO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BY MOHAMMAD FAROUQ FARHANG, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF THAT MINISTRY, TO RECEIVE MESSAGE THAT POLICE/GENDARMERIE WISHED THAT RADIO TRANSMITTERS BE REMOVED FROM ALL USAID VEHICLES IN KABUL AND SYSTEM SHUT DOWN. (SINGLE SIDE BAND NETWORK TO KANDAHAR AND LASHKAR GAH WAS NOT MENTIONED.) MEETING CONCLUDED WITH AGREEMENT TO LEAVE NETWORK ON STANDBY (PENDING FINAL DECISION BY GOA) WITH USE LIMITED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMERGENCIES AS WAS WORKED OUT IN EARLIER MEETING WITH MINISTER

OF COMMUNICATIONS (SEE REFTEL). ACTION REQUIRED: NONE. END SUMMARY.

2. FARHANG TOOK GREAT PAINS EXPLAIN THIS WAS GENERAL POLICY OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND NOT ESPECIALLY AIMED AT USG. SIMILAR POLICIES WERE BEING APPLIED TO ALL OTHER COUNTRIES BE IT UK, USSR, CHINA, ETC. HE HELD OUT SOME HOPE THE POLICY MIGHT BE LIFTED AT SOME LATER DATE.

3. USAID DIRECTOR REVIEWED BACKGROUND OF TALKS BY CHARGE WITH MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS. HE NOTED THAT IN MEETING WITH MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS THAT IT HAD BEEN AGREED TO LEAVE USAID KABUL NETWORK ON STANDBY BASIS TO BE USED ONLY FOR EMERGENCIES (SECURITY, MEDICAL, FIRE, ETC) PENDING FINAL DECISION BY GOA. IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT USAID HAD ALREADY TAKEN INITIATIVE BY REMOVING ANTENNAS AND MICROPHONES FROM ALMOST ALL OF THE USAID VEHICLES (EXCEPT FOR DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S CARS). EXCEPT FOR OCCASIONAL OPERATIONAL CHECKS OF SYSTEM WITH USAID BY EMBASSY, SYSTEM WAS NOT OPERATING AT THE PRESENT TIME.

4. AT FIRST FARHANG SUGGESTED THAT USAID SYSTEM (DISCUSSION SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED EMBASSY NETWORK) BE ENTIRELY SHUT DOWN PENDING OUTCOME TALKS WITH MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION. BUT AT END OF CONVERSATION AFTER HE WAS REMINDED OF CHARGE/MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS ORAL AGREEMENT (REFTEL), FARHANG AGREED IT ALL RIGHT TO LEAVE USAID NETWORK IN STANDBY CONDITION FOR POSSIBLE USE IN SERIOUS EMERGENCY. HE SAID HE WOULD BE CHECKING WITH COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERIOR AND WOULD LET USAID KNOW OUTCOME IN NEXT FOUR OR FIVE DAYS. HE OPINED THE PROBLEM WHICH BOTHERED POLICE WAS NOT SO MUCH STANDBY CONDITION OF CENTRAL RADIO UNIT IN USAID COMPOUND AS RADIOS IN VEHICLES.

5. USAID DIRECTOR MADE IT CLEAR WE PREPARED COMPLY WITH GOA'S FINAL DECISION KABUL NETWORK.
COMMENT: WHILE FARHANG FINALLY AGREED STATUS QUO AS AGREED PREVIOUSLY WITH MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, I.E. ANTENNA AND MICROPHONES REMOVED FROM MOST OF THE USAID VEHICLES AND TRANSMISSION SYSTEM TO BE LEFT ON STANDBY BASIS, IT STILL POSSIBLE THAT POLICE/GENDARMERIE WILL DEMAND FULL SHUT DOWN USAID SYSTEM. WHILE THIS WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE SINCE SYSTEM IS MAINLY TO GET MORE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EFFICIENT USE USAID VEHICLE FLEET AND USAID MAINTENANCE VEHICLES, THERE IS NO CRITICAL NEED FOR USAID/KABUL NETWORK AS LONG AS TELEPHONES WORK.

6. WILL ADVISE STATUS WHEN GOA HAS TAKEN FURTHER STEPS.
DECON 10/1/75.
LEWIS UNQUOTE RUSH

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